29 September 1972

Dear Harold:

All the enclosed stuff should be self-explanatory except where notes are attached.

In general, we feel that the reappearance of Martha in public means they are making a concerted effort to impart the conviction that they have the Watergate case all buttoned up, no loose ends left, nothing to worry about etc etc. We believe that if anything the opposite is true, that they're still terrified and probably with good reason.

One of the real measures of their demoralization is the Weiss-Dellinger expedition to bring back the three liberated prisoners. We have thought from the beginning that Hoffa was enticed into making his bid to go get some POWs (possibly through Taub, whose precise role remains very obscure, and the violence of the administration attack on him to discredit him indicates their worry) and that for some reason no one has been able to understand the whole Hoffa bit was scrubbed, possibly when someone realized how Hoffa probably would handle it from a humane standpoint). We have had the suspicion for some time that in their panic over the Watergate affair they completely forgot about the Weiss-Dellinger trip and remembered too late to stop it. It's a most embarrassing development, because the POWs, Mrs. Weiss and Dellinger already have been able to say enough to give many people their first suspicion of how cynically the POW issue has been used all along. Kissinger's latest extensions and trips, plus the WOR leak about an imminent settlement, all fit in, it seems to us. One question we can't decide at this point is whether the WOR leak's purpose was simply to take some of the spotlight away from the returning POWs and what may be done to and about them, or whether it actually is a testing of the reaction if Thieu is actually tossed to the wolves.

What is going on in the Philippines is another interesting thing, and we may be about to learn that there is after all a terrible Communist threat there which has to be dealt with just in case we should have to neglect the Communist threat in Indochina, like being driven to end the war in order to get reelected. The Chronicle this morning carried a story by Keyes Beech of CDN to the effect that Marcos didn't declare martial law until he came to a full understanding with the American military about protecting American investments there. This means of course they are behind it, and the only question is to what extent their actions are sanctioned by the White House. They could be creating one of those situations on their own, of course. The other day we heard an interesting discussion of the situation by two Filipino students and a young American who had left Manila after the coup. They claim the so-called terrorist incidents have been manufactured by the military and that the so-called People's Army, while beyond reach in the hills, is very small. But Marcos, who cannot run for a third term and has tried and failed to arrange for his wife to run in his place for a third term, is increasingly isolated and feels [redacted] the Liberal Party leader, Benigno Acquino, a Senator who is among those arrested. Acquino recently took a swing through Califonria drumming up support among Filipino farmers in the valley and went over big. He's like Sun Yat-sen was among overseas Chinese 50 years ago, a ball of fire because the situation is so rotten and his opposition is only force and terror by officials.

You probably recall that the excuse for Marcos' declaration of martial law was an assassination attempt upon his defense minister, which conveniently failed. The kids we heard were frank in saying they suspected the CIA. They may be wrong, but the opinion means something. Acquino is a very articulate guy in the Magsaysay traditon. You may recall that Magsaysay died in a mysterious plane crash right after he launched a land reform program.

This replies to various things raised in your 9 through 11.

Vacation: Begins Oct. 1 and goes three weeks. We probably won't go anywhere but just stay here and try to get caught up a bit, not knocking ourselves out. If we should decide to do anything that might involved your holding mail, we'll advise.

In your 9/20 note to one Ed, you discuss the OSS book. As you say, it appears to be written largely to imply that the OSS was such a collection of odd characters that it's an interesting historical phenomenon of another day, now long past. By implication a whitewash of the OSS's successor. We have a copy but have done no more than leaf through it. A review copy came to the office which I managed to get. It's the usual $10 job one is accustomed to expect in these cases, published by the University of California Press, and with nothing whatever to go on I suspect the fine Italian hand of Robert Scalapino in the background.

Your note of 9/20 about the service contract on your copier. Sounds like a fine idea, and let's hope it works out well. Here's another contribution toward it for the first year, which will make us feel better about your sending us copies of things now and then.

We think we've found the quote you want from Kleindienst about any rapid investigation of the Watergate Caper by the FBI would be called a whitewash if it were too quick. UPI from Washington Sept. 22. Clipping enclosed.

Best,

jdw